Research Utilization Of Registered Nurses in US Army Hospitals

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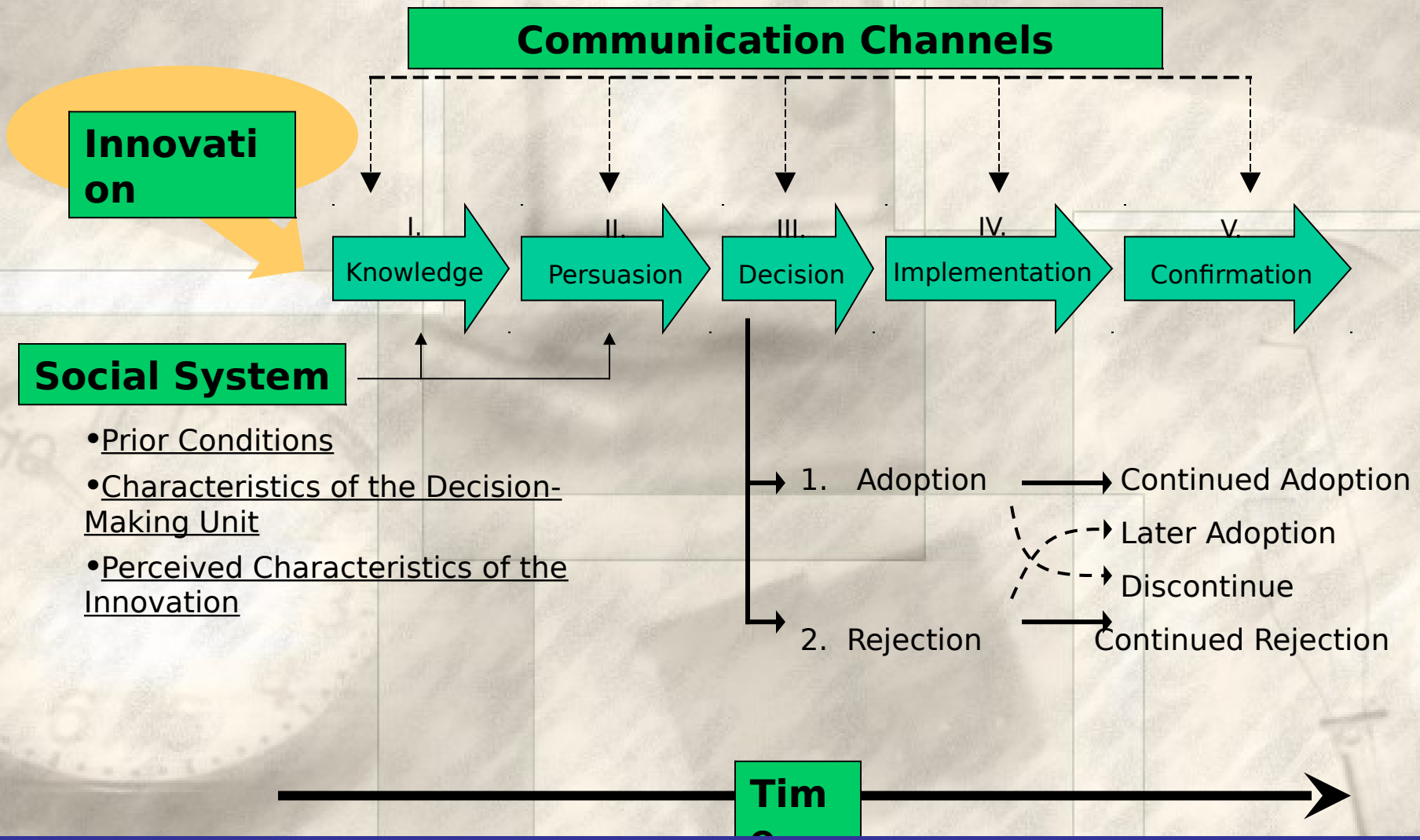
Background and Significance

- **There is a gap between knowledge and its use in practice**
- **Definitions of Research Utilization are vague and inconsistent with little conceptualization of the phenomenon**
- **Barriers and facilitators of Research Utilization are well described in the civilian population**
- **There has been very limited study of Research Utilization in military facilities**

Theoretical Framework

Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations



Types of Research Utilization

- Overall
- Direct/Instrumental
- Indirect/Conceptual
- Persuasive/Symbolic

Purpose of the Study

- **To determine the extent to which RNs working in Army Hospitals do or do not use research findings in their practice**
- **To identify the individual and organizational factors that facilitate or hinder the use of research findings in practice**

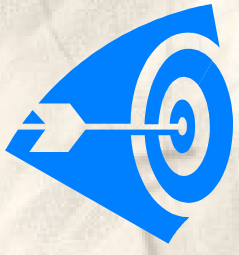
Measures

A Modified Dillman(2000) approach used to administer two survey instruments:

- **Research Utilization Survey (Estabrooks, 1997) , adapted for use by military RNS and shortened from 90 to 41 items**
- **Organization Climate Index for Military Units (Mylle, 1998), 39-item short versio**

Methods

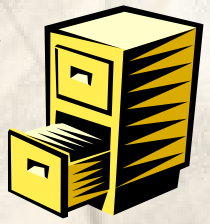
- **Design: Descriptive Correlational**
- **Setting: 3 Army MTFs in the North Atlantic Regional Medical Command of differing size**
- **Sample: Convenience; All RNs at each MTF were eligible and approached to participate**



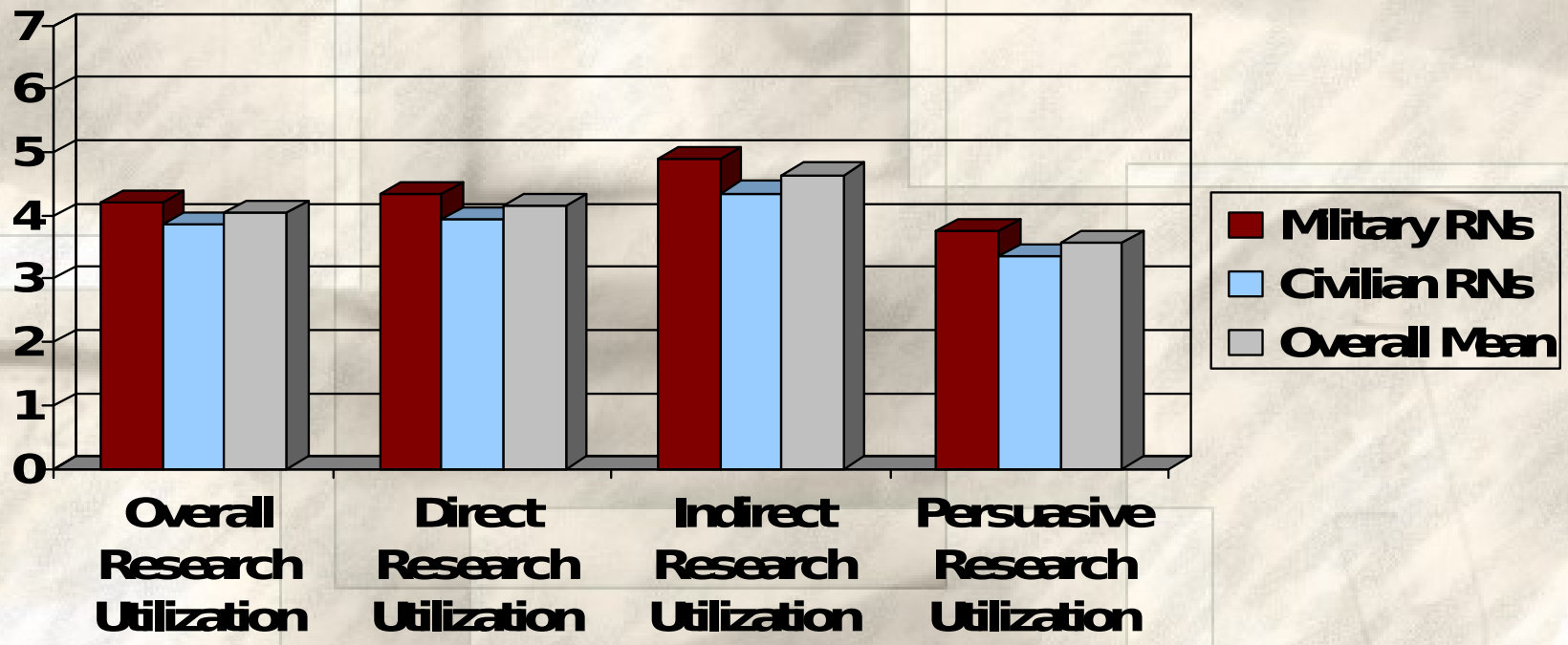
Data Analysis

- **313 of 860 surveys were returned (36.4%) of which 290 were usable**

- **Analysis used descriptive statistics, comparison of means, correlation, ANOVA and regression**



Nurses' Use of Research Findings in Practice (N=290)

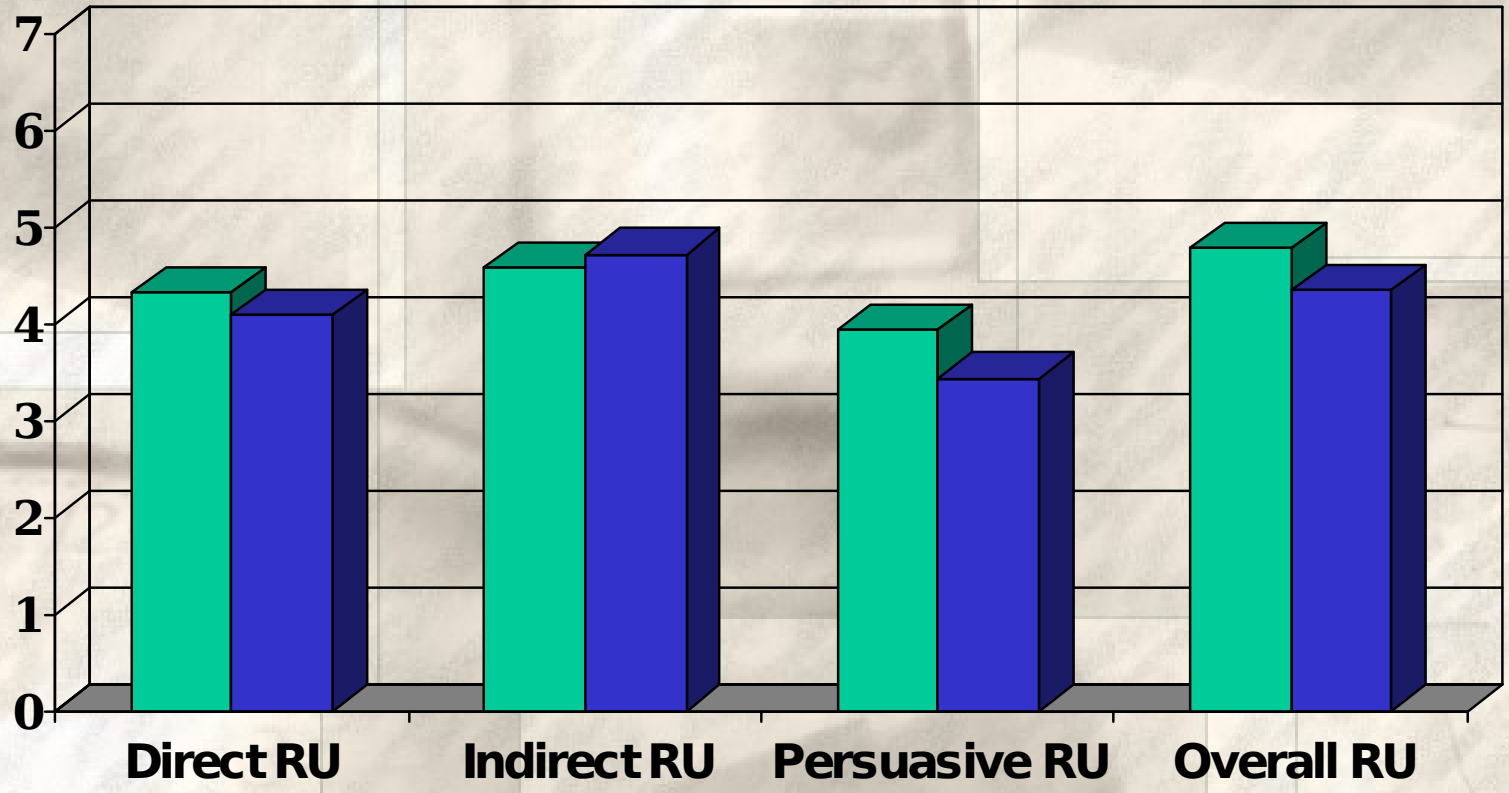


The military nurses in the sample had higher mean scores in all types of RU, but were only significantly different in the areas of Overall ($p = .016$) and Indirect RU ($p = .029$)

Factors Influencing Research Utilization

- **Overall Research Utilization was partially explained by the factors: Belief Suspension, Organizational Innovativeness, Cosmopoliteness and Organizational Respect for Rules (R^2=0.377)**
- **Belief Suspension appeared to be the only major factor that helped to explain all types of Research Utilization but Persuasive**
- **There was a significant negative correlation between Direct, Indirect and Persuasive Research Utilization and years of experience in nursing ($p < .05$). There was no significant relationship between Overall RU and years of experience.**

Research Utilization between Managers and Staff Nurses



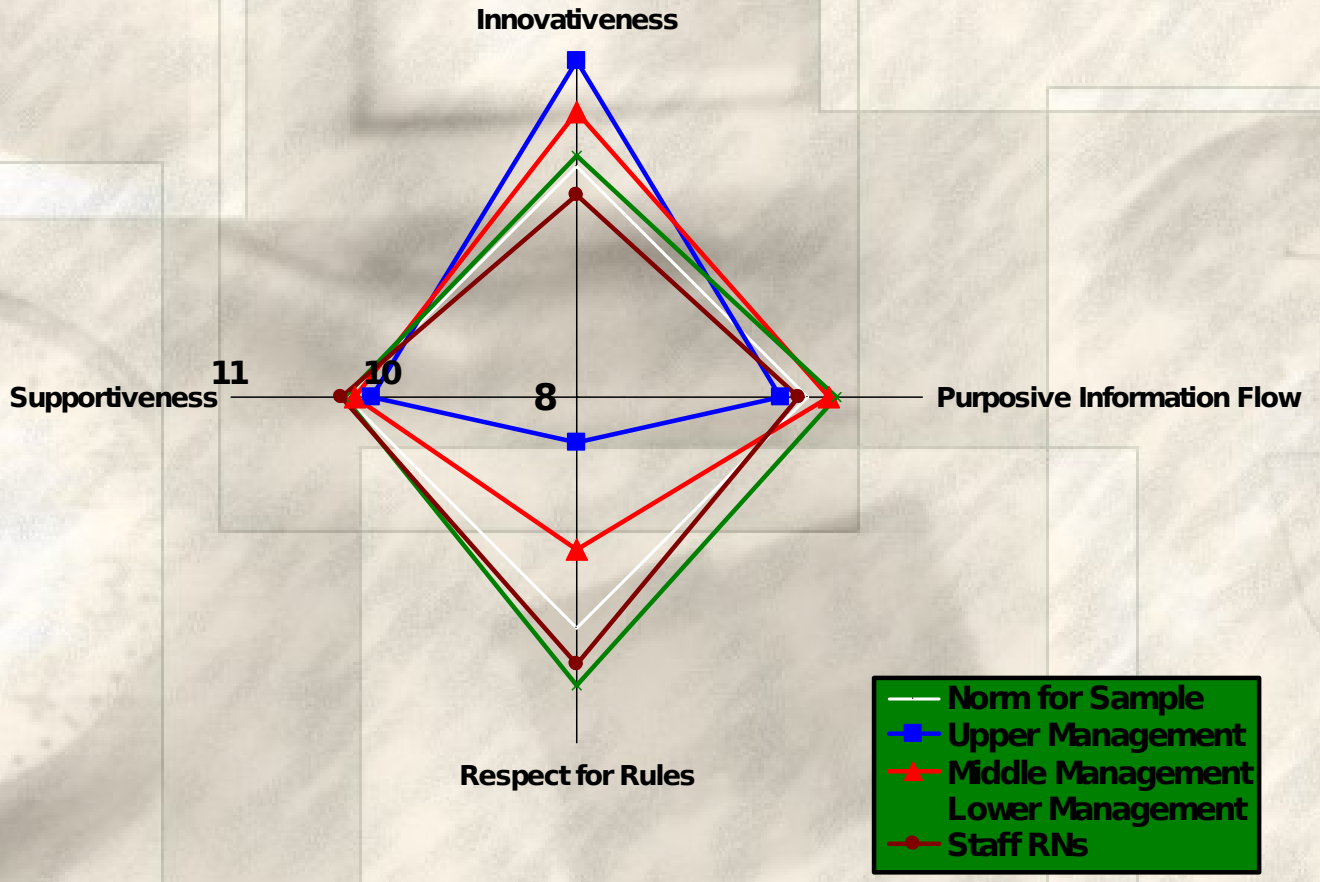
Staff nurses scored slightly higher on Indirect RU, but Managers and staff nurses differed significantly only in Persuasive Research Utilization (p = .012)

Other Findings

- The top 3 journals that nurses from all levels read were **AJN, Nursing 2002, RN**. Very few utilized research journals.
- A significant number of nurses are turning to the internet for information, primarily identified as **MedScape and electronic nursing forums**.
- Nurses had to go to the library to find research material; it was rarely available at the unit level.
- 39.8% of nurses surveyed did not know if there was a champion for research utilization available in their facility

Findings Related to the Organizational Climate Index

- The higher one was on the managerial scale, the higher their perception of organizational innovativeness and the lower their perception of respect for rules



Other Findings Related to the Organizational Climate Index

- Different groups within the sample perceived organizational support and purposive information flow in the same ways.
- The military nurses scored higher on Organizational Innovativeness and lower on the Respect for Rules Scale while the civilian nurses scored lower on Organizational Innovativeness and higher on the Respect for Rules Scale

Strengths and Limitations of the Study

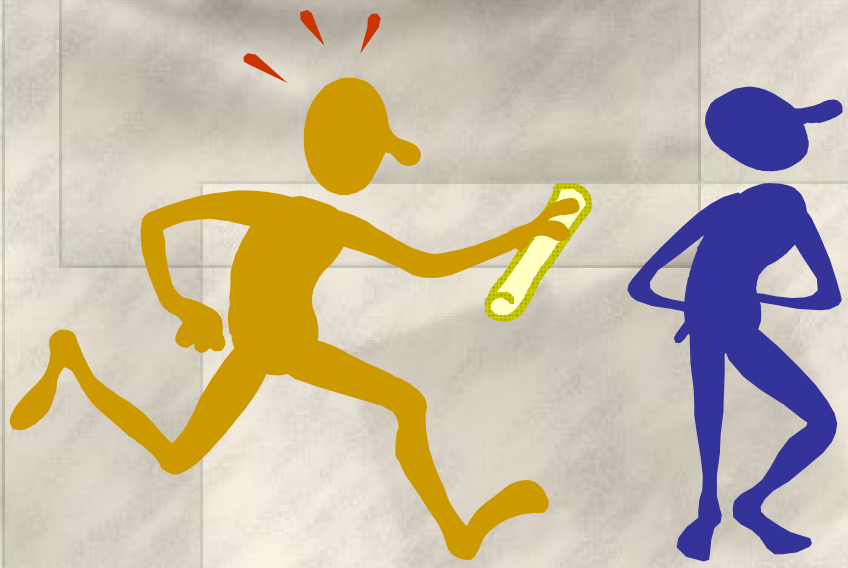
- **Strengths**
  - Study included Organizational Factors
  - Large population from which to draw

- **Limitations**
  - Self-selection Bias—Sample was not representative of population; Military were skewed toward higher ranks
  - Some groups were too small to make valid inferences (i.e., Number of APNs = 29, Hospitals = 3)

Implications

- **Organizational Factors MUST be considered before Individual factors. The nurse cannot implement RU projects until the organizational climate/culture is right for them**
- **Support from superiors and time to participate in research utilization activities would enhance implementation of EBP**
- **Unit Libraries should include journals and more research oriented material**
- **Electronic resources are a good way to disseminate information**
- **Advanced Practice Nurses should be utilized as “champions” for RU Projects**

So What?



Dissemination Efforts

- **Collaboration with Carole Estabrooks at University of Alberta to combine databases and write article for Research in Nursing And Health**
- **Plans for at least 2 more articles to Professional Journals, to include those most read by nurses**
- **Poster and paper presentations of study at 1 international and multiple national, regional and local conferences**
- **Invited to participate in National and International Invitational Knowledge Utilization Conferences**
- **Follow on grant application for qualitative, theory generating study on research utilization**

Putting the Results to Work

- **Development of collaborative Evidence-Based Performance Improvement Project**
- **Implementation of Evidence-Based Pet Therapy WRAMC regulation**
- **Assistance with development of Evidence-Based WRAMC Performance Improvement projects (Trach Care, DVT Protocol, Enteral Feeding Protocol)**
- **Coordination of Evidence-Based Nursing Column in monthly AN Newsletter**

Questions

If you would like a copy of these slides, please e-mail me at deborah.kenny@na.amedd.army.mil or call at (202) 782-7025